



# Topiramate for preventing seizures

This leaflet is about the use of topiramate to prevent epileptic seizures called focal or partial seizures. (Seizures may also be called convulsions or fits.)



This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of this medicine in children. The information may differ from that provided by the manufacturer. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Do not stop giving topiramate suddenly, as your child may have more seizures.

## Name of drug

**Topiramate**

**Brand name:** Topamax®

## Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

It is important that your child takes topiramate regularly so that they have fewer seizures.

## What is topiramate available as?

- **Tablets:** 25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg, 200 mg
- **Capsules:** 15 mg, 25 mg, 50 mg (sprinkle capsules)

## When should I give topiramate?


You will usually start by giving topiramate **once a day**, while your child gets used to the medicine. This is usually in the evening.

When your child is used to topiramate, you will usually give it twice a day: once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are 10–12 hours apart, for example sometime between 7 and 8 am and between 7 and 8 pm.

## How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of topiramate (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

When you first start giving topiramate to your child, you will give them a small amount and then increase the dose bit by bit over a few days or weeks. This helps your child to get used to the medicine. Your doctor will explain what to do.

 **It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.**

## How should I give it?



**Tablets** should be swallowed whole with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablets.

You can crush the tablets and mix them with one tablespoon of fruit juice or soft food (e.g. yogurt, honey or jam). Make sure your child swallows it all straight away, without chewing.



**Sprinkle capsule:** Open the capsule and sprinkle the granules into a teaspoonful of soft food (e.g. yogurt, honey or jam). Make sure your child swallows it all straight away, without chewing. These capsules can also be swallowed whole with a glass of water, juice or milk.

## When should the medicine start working?

It may take a few weeks for topiramate to work properly, so your child may still have seizures for a while. Continue to give the medicine in the way that you have been told to by your doctor.

## What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of topiramate, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of topiramate, you **do not** need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

## What if I forget to give it?

- If you remember up to 4 hours after you should have given a dose, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am.
- If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose. Wait until it is time to give the next normal dose.



**Never give a double dose of topiramate.**

## What if I give too much?



If you think you may have given your child too much topiramate, contact your doctor or local NHS services (111 in England and Scotland; 0845 4647 in Wales).

Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. Have the packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

## Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they cause effects that we don't want (side-effects).

### Side-effects you must do something about

- Children may sweat less when taking topiramate. Be careful that they don't overheat, particularly in hot weather.

### Other side-effects you need to know about

- The most common side-effects with topiramate are poor appetite, drowsiness (sleepiness) and headache. These effects should get better within about a month. If they don't, contact your doctor for advice.
- Your child may lose weight, get tummy upsets or 'pins and needles', feel dizzy, have blurred vision or may be unsteady. Your child's behaviour may change, and they may become moody or seem nervous. Their sleep may be disturbed.
- Your child may have some difficulty concentrating. Rarely, they may also have some difficulty in finding the right words when talking. If either of these problems persists, contact your doctor for advice.
- Kidney stones are more common when taking topiramate. You can help to prevent this by making sure that your child drinks plenty of fluids. If your child gets severe pain in their back or groin, has pain when

passing urine (doing a wee). or there is blood in the urine, take them to your doctor straight away.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side-effects to a UK safety scheme at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard>.

### Can other common medicines be given at the same time as topiramate?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist **before** giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complementary medicines.

### Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?

If your child is going to have treatment in hospital, it is important to tell the doctor that your child is taking topiramate.


### Epilepsy and pregnancy

- Pregnancy presents a risk to both the mother with epilepsy and her unborn baby. If your daughter has sex, it is essential that she uses adequate contraception to prevent an unplanned pregnancy.
- If your daughter is worried that she may be pregnant, it is important that she sees your family doctor as early as possible. Your daughter should keep taking her medication until she sees her doctor.

### Topiramate and pregnancy


- Topiramate may harm an unborn baby. This should be discussed with your doctor.
- The oral contraceptive pill can be used safely by women or girls who are taking topiramate. However, she may need to take a higher-strength pill to ensure adequate contraception. This should be discussed with her GP or family planning clinic.

### General advice about medicines for epilepsy

 **Do not** suddenly stop giving any of these medicines to your child, as they may have a seizure. If you are worried, talk to your doctor but carry on giving the medicine to your child as usual.

If your child seems to have more seizures than usual, contact your doctor.


- If your doctor decides to stop a particular medicine, they will discuss this with you. You will usually reduce the dose bit by bit.

 **Do not** change the dose of any drug without talking to your doctor first.

- It is best that your child always has the same brand of each medicine, as there may be differences between brands. Keep a record of which medicines your child

has. If you have any concerns or questions, speak with your child's doctor or pharmacist.

- Try to give medicines at about the same times every day, to help you remember.
- Only give the medicine(s) to *your* child. Never give them to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.

 If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor straight away.

- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicines you have at home have not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

### Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.
- Keep the medicine in the container it came in

### Who to contact for more information

Your child's hospital doctor, epilepsy nurse or pharmacist will be able to give you more information about topiramate and other medicines used to treat epilepsy.

You can also get useful information from:

#### England

NHS 111: 111 - [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

#### Scotland

NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24  
[www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

#### Wales/Galw Lechyd Cymru

NHS Direct: 0845 4647  
[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)

#### Northern Ireland

NI Direct: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

#### Young Epilepsy

Helpline: 01342 831 342  
[www.youngepilepsy.org.uk](http://www.youngepilepsy.org.uk)

#### Epilepsy Society

Helpline: 01494 601 400  
[www.epilepsysociety.org.uk](http://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk)

#### Epilepsy Action

Helpline: 0808 800 5050  
[www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

[www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)